

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 178027 TOSEC 080083

NODIS

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM KABUL DATED JULY 14, 1978 SENT
SECSTATE WASHDC IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T KABUL 5671

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FOR ACTING SECRETARY FROM NEWSOM

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, AF, OVIP

SUBJECT: REACTION TO AFGHANISTAN

REF: KABUL 5670

1. ONE COMES AWAY FROM AN AFTERNOON'S EXPOSURE TO THE
NEW REGIME IN KABUL WITH A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS: "WHAT
ARE WE DEALING WITH"? IS IT AN INEXPERIENCED GROUP OF
GENUINE REFORMERS FEELING THEIR WAY? ARE AMIN AND TARAKI
DEDICATED COMMUNISTS MASKING THEIR INTENTIONS? ARE THEY
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FRONTS FOR AN UNSEEN JUNTA OR COMMITTEE?

2. ON THE POSITIVE SIDE, THEY PROFESS A GENUINE DESIRE
FOR GOOD RELATIONS AND HELP FROM THE UNITED STATES. SOME
OF THE SIGNS ARE GOOD: OUR AID, OUR EMBASSY AND OUR PEACE
CORPS PERSONNEL HAVE HAD ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.
COOPERATION GOES FORWARD IN SEVERAL AREAS. PRESIDENT

TARAKI ASSURED ME THERE WOULD BE NO "FOREIGN TROOPS" IN AFGHANISTAN, THEY WOULD PURSUE GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT, FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THEIR NEIGHBORS AND WOULD BE SUBORDINATE TO NO ONE. THEIR INITIAL AGRICULTURAL POLICIES, AS DESCRIBED ARE NOT IN THE MARXIST-LENINIST MOLD.

2. ON THE NEGATIVE - OR UNCERTAIN SIDE - BOTH AMIN AND TARAKI WERE EQUIVOCAL ON THEIR INTENTIONS RE THE DURAND LINE AND THE HELMAND WATERS AGREEMENT, ALTHOUGH IT COULD BE, AS THEY SAID, THAT THEY MERELY WANTED MORE TIME TO STUDY THE ISSUE. THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A GROWING NUMBER OF SOVIET ADVISORS IN THE MINISTRIES, INCLUDING SOME IMPORTANT TO OUR AID PROJECTS SUCH AS AGRICULTURE, PLANNING AND EDUCATION. THIS NATURALLY RAISES A QUESTION ABOUT HOW SOON IT WILL BE BEFORE OUR OUTLOOK TOWARD DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR'S CLASH. AMIN'S ANSWER ABOUT THE POSSIBLE RELATIONSHIP OF HIS PARTY TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, I FOUND UNSATISFACTORY. TARAKI'S ANSWER ON PRISONERS (THAT IT WAS AN INTERNAL AFFAIR AND THAT HE COULD ASK ABOUT PRISONERS IN U.S.) WAS A DEFIANT FLASH. HIS COMMENTS ON RELIGION HINTED AT CONTEMPT.

3. TODAY'S (THURSDAY, JULY 13) CONVERSATIONS DID, HOWEVER, PRESENT CLEARLY TO BOTH AMIN AND TARAKI THE POLICIES OF OUR AID PROGRAM AND THE CONCERNS (HUMAN RIGHTS, GENUINENESS OF NON-ALIGNMENT, RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN'S NEIGHBORS, SECRET

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POLICIES ON NARCOTICS, AND OUR ABILITY TO WORK EFFECTIVELY) WHICH WILL DETERMINE HOW FAR WE CAN GO.

4. I DO NOT COME AWAY SANGUINE ABOUT THE NATURE OR INTENTIONS OF THIS REGIME, BUT I FEEL THE SITUATION IS SUFFICIENTLY FLUID THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE FOR US, ON OUR SIDE, TO APPEAR TO BE BACKING AWAY. CONSEQUENTLY, I RECOMMEND THAT WE GO FORWARD WITH NEGOTIATING AND SIGNING OF CENTRAL HELMAND DRAINAGE PROJECT. THIS REPRESENTS CONTINUATION OF OUR WORK IN AREA WHERE WE HAVE BEEN LONG ASSOCIATED, IT IS DESIRED BY GOA, AND IS READY TO GO. THIS WOULD SHOW OUR GOOD FAITH. WE SHOULD, THEREAFTER, CONSIDER EACH FURTHER NEW PROJECT IN THE LIGHT OF OUR CONTINUING EXPERIENCE WITH THIS REGIME. I BELIEVE WE SHOULD STICK TO PROJECTS WHICH MEET BASIC HUMAN NEEDS CRITERIA; I AM NOT SURE WE CAN BE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS. BEYOND THAT, I BELIEVE THINGS WE SHOULD WATCH ARE CLEAR: POLICIES TOWARD NEIGHBORS, ALAVISHNESS OF ADHERENCE TO SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES; UNEXPLAINED LIMITING OF OUR ACCESS OR PROGRAMS; PLANNING POLICIES, ESPECIALLY IN AGRICULTURE; ROLE OF KHALQ PARTY IN RELATION TO THE WORLD COMMUNIST MOVEMENT; WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE WITH UN ON NCARCOTICS. ON

OUR PART, WE HAVE EXPLAINED TO THEM OUR CONCERNS AND WE
ARE IN POSITION, IF CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRE TO SAY THAT WE CANNOT
CONTINUE FOR REASONS MADE CLEAR TO THEM AT THE OUTSET.

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UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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